

## Housing & Homeless Services Network

# Agenda

Wednesday, October 13, 2010

1:30 to 3:00 p.m.

Metro Hall, Room 310

9:00 – 9:15 a.m.      Coffee and Networking

9:15 – 11:00 a.m.

1.      **TBD**
2.      **TBD**
3.      **Surviving Crime & Violence: Street Youth & Victimization in Toronto Study, Stephen Gaetz, Canadian Homelessness Research Network**
4.      **Low Income Energy Program, Alex Flynn, Shelter, Support & Housing Administration**
5.      **New Business/ Announcements**

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Future agenda items:

Michele Connell, 416-397-4164/ [mconnel@toronto.ca](mailto:mconnel@toronto.ca) or Tracey Smith, 416-397-4830/ [tsmith4@toronto.ca](mailto:tsmith4@toronto.ca)  
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# Housing & Homeless Services Network

## Minutes

Wednesday, September 8, 2010

490 Sherbourne

Main Floor Amenities Room

**Attending:** Elizabeth Agoston, Rolando Aguilar, Luis Carrillos, Michele Connell, Dale Coppins, Donna Dalrymple, Dawn D'Cruz, Alexandra Gunn, Keith Hambly, Mike Higgins, Ken Kennedy, Ashley Lawrence, Alicia Lowe, Linsey MacPhee, John Methven, Steve Milne, Mariruth Morton, Toby Mullally, Rodney Nembhard, Stella Pinnock, Corey Raycraft, Michael Rosenberg, Fati Saliu-Ediagbonya, Bruno Scorsone, Mark Shapiro, Tracey Smith, Christine Swearing, Jennifer Sylvester, Katherine White, Ronny Yaron, Elisabeth Ziegler

1. Janet Fairfield assumed the Chair and called the seventh session of the 2010 Housing and Homeless Services Network meeting to order. Minutes of the meeting held on July 14, 2010 were approved as circulated.
2. **Fife House Housing Programs and Supports, Keith Hambly, 416-205-9885**

Fife House, founded in 1988, provides secure and affordable supportive housing and support services for persons living with HIV/AIDS. Services are provided in order to enhance quality of life, build on individual strengths, promote independence and create communities of support and care.

Fife House operates three Residential Programs that offer 24-hour support services through a network of qualified staff and volunteers:

### Sherbourne

- 12 story building with 112 units of housing
- 56 units for people living with HIV/ AIDS (45 apartment units and 11 transitional units) are operated by Fife House
- Building landlord is Wellesley Central Residences Inc with WoodGreen Community Services providing property management. WoodGreen also hosts community programs on site
- Fife House provides the support services to 56 units and community programming to the whole building

The Sherbourne Transitional Housing Program provides temporary supportive housing to people living with HIV/ AIDS to improve overall health, build life skills and support individuals to accomplish their housing goals. The program is a communal living environment for 11 persons, with a maximum residency of 9 months. The shared space includes living/dining room, kitchen, computer area and laundry facilities. Private, single occupancy bachelor units within the program are fully furnished and contain a 3 piece bathroom and kitchenette with a mini fridge, microwave, sink and cupboards. The staff are available 24/7 to assist residents in finding suitable permanent housing through intensive case management.

## Jarvis

- 82 apartment units (all are designated for people living with HIV/ AIDS)
- Mostly one bedrooms
- Toronto Community Housing is the landlord (the only TCHC building dedicated to PHA's)
- Landlord makes tenant selection through Housing Connections waitlist
- Fife House provides services from personal care supports offering bath and activities of daily living assistance, to accompaniment to medical appointments as well as advocacy and informal counseling.

## Denison

- The first and longest running program, Denison opened in 1990 and continues to provide support to 5 individuals in a rent geared to income residential setting
- All residents enjoy the privacy of their own room and share common living space
- Only program where Fife is both the landlord and support provider.

Fife House also provides support services to 15 residents at 2 other residential locations in collaboration with St. Clare's Multi-Faith Society.

Community Programs, which are part of all residential programs at Fife House, engage clients and residents in social-recreational activities, aiming to build on personal strengths and independence. The program oversees an on-site Holistic Wellness Centre that offers a variety of alternative therapies, free of charge to individuals in all programs.

## Homeless Outreach Program

- A critical link for people living with HIV/ AIDS in Toronto who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- Provides individual case management to clients, addressing issues of finances, community supports and resources required to find and maintain secure, affordable housing
- In 2009 over 320 PHAs accessed HOP services.

## The Research and Evaluation Department

- Instrumental in investigating and reporting on issues related to HIV and housing
- Conducting evaluation of existing programs - HOP, Jarvis and Denison
- Strong focus on the Positive Spaces, Healthy Places longitudinal study, now in its 4<sup>th</sup> year
- Current research underway on Families, HIV and Housing
- Future research will look at Transitional Housing and PHA's
- Will undertake an evaluation of the Sherbourne Transitional Housing Program.

## The Ontario HIV & Substance Use Training Program

- delivers sessions to front line social services providers throughout the province
- educates staff from a wide variety of organizations about the links between substance use, mental health and HIV/ AIDS.

One of the cornerstones of Fife House and their success is the dedication, commitment and powerful impact of their volunteers. In the past year they provided 15,000 hours of service to their clients.

## **Fife House Funders:**

- AIDS Bureau of Ministry of Health Long Term Care

- Toronto-Central Local Health Integration Networks (47 % of budget comes from TCLHIN)
- City of Toronto: Hostel Services/ Homeless Initiative Funds/ AIDS Prevention Community Investment Program
- Public Health Agency of Canada- AIDS Community Action Program
- Ontario HIV Treatment Network.

For more information visit: [www.fifehouse.org](http://www.fifehouse.org).

For information on SPOTLIGHT 2010 [www.spotlightfife.com](http://www.spotlightfife.com).

For PHAs, Community-based organizations and Researchers:

[www.healthyhousing.ca](http://www.healthyhousing.ca).

### **3. Housing Programs and Supports, Habitat Services, Michael Higgins, 416-537-2721 x230**

Habitat Services was established in 1987 as a result of serious concerns in the community about the living conditions of consumer/survivors in boarding homes in Toronto. It was through ongoing consultations between the City of Toronto, the Ministries of Community and Social Services and Health and Housing, the Supportive Housing Coalition (Mainstay) as well as consumers/survivors, advocates, mental health workers and boarding home owners that Habitat Services and the Habitat housing model was developed.

#### **The Habitat Model**

The model is unique in Ontario and is based on a contract between Habitat, a not-for-profit agency, and selected owners of boarding homes, the majority of whom are business people operating in the private sector. The cornerstone of the contract is the Habitat standards document, which lays out the services that boarding home owners must provide. The standards consider issues such as cleanliness and condition of properties, provision of quality meals, personal supplies, linens and even furnishings including common rooms with TV's and phones.

Habitat sets the room and board rate for each tenant to ensure it is affordable, and there is a mediation process in place that all owners must follow before initiating an eviction process. A tenants' complaints process has also been developed and implemented. Habitat staff monitor compliance with the contract by developing strong relationships with rooming house owners. They meet with owners and inspect properties regularly. Rooming house owners receive a per diem for each tenant. This subsidy is provided by the Ministry of Health - Long Term Care and the City of Toronto.

#### **Description of the Homes**

There are over 40 Habitat-monitored boarding homes across the City of Toronto, housing about 900 people. While many of these boarding homes are in the west end, there are homes available across the City. The housing offered is communal living, with mainly two tenants per room. Single rooms are available, and Habitat is committed to increasing the number of these single rooms in future.

#### **On-Site Support**

24-hour staffing is provided by the owners, and includes cooking, cleaning and generally assisting tenants, but it should be noted that the homes are not clinical settings. If required, tenants have their own workers who visit them at home. In addition to the support that tenants' own workers may provide, each home has a team of two or more workers assigned to it. These workers, called site support staff, are funded by either Habitat or COTA Health. They visit two or three times a week and help organize regular house meetings, recreation, and other activities for the tenants in the home.

Tenant participation in these activities is voluntary. Site support staff will attempt to provide some one-to-one support when their time permits, but their involvement does not replace the support provided by tenants' own workers.

### **Eligibility, Intake Procedures and Recent Developments**

To be eligible, potential tenants need to have a low level of income and assets and some history of mental health issues or a history of receiving mental health care. Applications can be obtained from the Toronto Mental Health and Addictions Supportive Housing Network, 416-979-1994, extension 231 or <http://hsn-registry.roxysoftware.com>. A user-friendly Tenant Guide has been developed that can be emailed to any potential tenants, their workers and families.

Habitat Services is committed to ensuring that any new rooming homes they contract with, will provide single room occupancy only. The two latest Habitat-subsidized homes are located on Edgewood Avenue in east Toronto and Queen Street West in Parkdale. The Edgewood home features all single rooms and en suite bathrooms. The Queen Street West home is called Edmond Place and will be operated by Parkdale Activity and Recreation Centre. It is expected to be ready for tenants in January, 2011. Edmond Place will be based on a new model that is an adaption of the Habitat model described above. Tenants will have their own fully contained units in a newly renovated building that will also feature common areas.

For Habitat Intake, call **416-537-2721, ext. 240**.

The Habitat Community Liaison worker, Mike Higgins, [mhiggins@habitat-services.org](mailto:mhiggins@habitat-services.org), speaks to interested groups of service providers about Habitat and arranges and conducts tours of Habitat-monitored homes for potential tenants and/or their workers and families. He can also assist anyone through the process, including helping potential tenants complete the application form.

### **3. Municipal Elections, Joanne Wheatley**

Joanne provided an overview on Municipal voting instructions for people using shelters or drop-ins. You can vote in the City of Toronto's municipal election on October 25 if you live in the City of Toronto, are a Canadian citizen and are 18 years of age or older.

If an individual is not on the voters' list, they can add their name at the City Clerk's Office during business hours from September 7 to October 25 at:

Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W., 1<sup>st</sup> floor, North  
Etobicoke Civic Centre, 399 The West Mall, Main floor  
North York Civic Centre, 5100 Yonge St., Ground floor  
Scarborough Civic Centre, 150 Borough Dr., 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
Toronto Elections Office, 89 Northline Rd.

**OR**

At the location they go to vote. They do not need to show identification to be added to the voters' list but will need to complete a revision form and swear an oath declaring who they are and that they are qualified to vote in the City of Toronto. As you need to be a resident of Toronto to vote, individuals must include where they live on the revision form. If they do not have a permanent residence, the place returned to most often to sleep or eat during the past 5 weeks is considered where they live for voting purposes. This could be a shelter, drop-in centre or any other location in the City. Individuals must vote in a voting place in the City ward in which they are residing.

Shelters and drop-ins across the City have been provided with posters stating the location of the closest voting place. Posters also include where to vote during the advance vote on October 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, 16 & 17. Voting instructions will be available in 23 different languages at every voting site.

For election information, call 311 or visit [www.toronto.ca/elections](http://www.toronto.ca/elections).

#### **4. Toronto Bed Bug Project, Alicia Lowe**

Alicia provided a brief update on the work of the Toronto Bed Bug Project. Two Public Health staff have been reassigned to oversee community initiatives concerning bed bugs. They are working closely with Bug and Scrub, a social enterprise out of Seaton House emergency shelter, and a number of organisations and groups that are taking the lead in their communities in addressing bed bugs. They are tracking the work currently being requested of Bug and Scrub as well as calls that come into Public Health on this issue. This information is important in their communications with the Province to both encourage more resources to the issue and develop a more coordinated response to this growing problem.

The Bed Bug Project is also focusing on completing the pilots in a number of Toronto Housing units. These pilots include implementing a comprehensive Pest Management System. They are also tracking bed bug calls, working with community agencies and support networks to assist in the development and management of their bed bug protocols as well continuing to support individuals who struggle with the requirements of prepping and cleaning their apartments. Their bed bug fact sheet has been translated into 13 languages so far.

Alicia reported that Sue Corke, Deputy City Manager, has met with all Divisions in the City of Toronto in efforts to combine resources and develop a coordinated approach to the broad based impact of bed bugs. She also reminded everyone that MPP Mike Colle will be hosting a Bed Bug Summit on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

If you have any questions or to report an infestation, you can contact Alicia Lowe 416-338-8699 or Cathy Loik at 416-338-8690. Please visit their website at [www.toronto.ca/health](http://www.toronto.ca/health) to find multiple resources and links.

#### **5. New Business/Announcements**

##### **Resources Exist for Networking and Training (RENT), Janet Fairfield, 416-686-3390 x9989**

###### Housing Outreach Presentations

- EYET Housing Services Outreach Facilitator Tammy Bays is available to offer onsite presentations at your agency. Presentations can involve a short 15 minute overview of RENT programs at your staff meeting, or longer sessions that include website overviews, and details about the Landlordconnect.ca online liaison centre and vacancy list including all new updated features. For further information please contact Tammy Bays at 647-258-9969, [outreach@housingworkers.ca](mailto:outreach@housingworkers.ca)

###### Training Essential Skills for Housing work (TESH)

- On Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, the fall series of the TESH Program begins. TESH provides core competency information about housing work to new workers, or those who would like a

review of basic skills. For further information please contact Janet Huynh at 647-259-9336,  
[tesh@housingworkers.ca](mailto:tesh@housingworkers.ca).

Getting Current: Key Changes at Toronto Employment & Social Services

- Sept 09, 2010, 9:30am – 12:30pm
- Ralph Thornton Centre, 765 Queen Street East, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor.

**Next Meeting:**

**Wednesday, October 13, 2010**  
**1:30 p.m.**  
**Room 310, Metro Hall**  
**55 John Street**